
Topic:	School Dress Code and School Uniform
Effective:	June 2021
Review Date:	June 2023
Cross-Reference:	Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Equity Inclusive Education Policy, Safe and Accepting Schools Policy, the Safe Schools Act 2000 – S. 302 (5). Education Act Reg 612/00 s19(1)), Dress Code Policy.
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education, Safe Schools

INTENDED PURPOSE:

To promote a positive learning environment in schools consistent with the values of the Halton District School Board (“the Board”) and to ensure a safe and inclusive learning and working environment for all students, staff and the community, regardless of their race, age, ability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, socio-economic circumstances, or body type/size.

PROCEDURE:**PART I – STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL DRESS CODES**

Dress codes must be presented in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. The Board believes students have a right to learn in a safe and caring space that is free of bias and discrimination, and that students have a right to respectfully express their individuality. To ensure learning environments are safe and respectful spaces, the Board has adopted a shared set of standards for student dress.

Our values and beliefs:

- All students should be able to dress for school without fear of unnecessary discipline, body shaming, bias or discrimination.
- Individuals are responsible for managing their own personal biases, behaviours and or perspectives/opinions (“distractions”) related to others’ choices of clothing.
- All students are treated equitably regardless of their race, age, ability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, socio-economic circumstances, or body type/size.
- Students have a right to wear clothing of their choice that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Students have a right to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Dress codes must avoid using language that reinforces stereotypes.
- Student dress code enforcement must not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, public speaking and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress. Schools need to be aware there may be diverse culturally-specific attire that would also meet the requirements of a course.
- Schools must maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is required. For example, activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (e.g., athletic shoes for Physical Education).

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- Dress codes must prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that display (but are not limited to) the following: images, logos or language that portray ethnic prejudice, racism, sexism, vulgarity, gang-related markings, obscenities, profanity, hate speech, and/or pornography.
 - Dress codes must prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia, or other illegal conduct or activities.
 - Dress codes must prevent students from wearing clothing that exposes or makes visible genitals and nipples.

Staff responsibility:

- School staff need to be able to explain the dress code and address dress code infractions without using body-shaming language.

Principal responsibility:

- Dress codes must be reviewed annually with the school council, staff and students.
- Dress code must be posted to the school website and shared annually with all members of the school community.

PART II – SCHOOL UNIFORMS

In accordance with School Council Regulations (Reg 612/00 s19(1)), each school may, through their school councils and in consultation with parents, students and staff, establish a school uniform policy that:

- is the result of a process initiated by the written request of a minimum of 20% of the families with students enrolled at the school (survey, letters etc.)
- is supported by a 75% majority of families determined to be eligible to vote
- addresses the issue of affordability
- is consistent with the school dress code
- is premised on voluntary compliance
- clearly defines which families are eligible to vote in consideration of both graduating students and families new to the school
- permits only the school logo and school name to be displayed on a school uniform
- includes an effective date and process for review at least every 5 years in consultation with staff, students and parents

In schools where a process to consider a school uniform has been initiated, the Principal, in consultation with the school council, shall develop and share with the appropriate

Superintendent, an action plan that includes:

- a committee to manage the process that includes parents, school personnel and students (if appropriate)
- the data related to the level of interest for a school uniform
- a process for consultation with the school community
- a communication plan
- procedures for establishing the 75% majority required and includes the wording of the question to be put to a vote
- a strategy to deal with affordability
- a review and monitoring process
- a process for the acquisition of apparel, if necessary